DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 133 HE 023 246

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TITLE Health Promotion Program.
INSTITUTION American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.; North Carolina Univ., Chapel Hill. Dept. of Health and Fitness.
SPONS AGENCY Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, Mich.
PUB DATE 89
GRANT UHMD01J(WJG)
NOTE 11p.; This report is one of a group gathered by the AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project, funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. For related documents, see HE 023 199-261.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Credits; Exercise; *Health Promotion; Higher Education; Models; Newsletters; Nutrition Instruction; *Physical Fitness; Program Descriptions; State Universities; Testing
IDENTIFIERS *AASCU ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project; Health Promotion Program; Mountain Area Health Education Center; *University of North Carolina Chapel Hill; Walking

ABSTRACT

The Health Promotion Program began with establishment of a one-credit course in health promotion and wellness and the training of family practice residents at the Mountain Area Health Education Center to serve as lab leaders in the course. The course later became part of the university's general education requirements. In addition, a health promotion minor has been established, and the Department of Health and Fitness was created by combining the health promotion program and the physical education department. Program activities include: the nutrition program, in cooperation with the university dining service, to provide healthy food choices on campus; student, staff, and faculty cholesterol testing and information dissemination; a walking program of regular exercise and competitions; humor; blood pressure checks; fitness testing; sponsorship of the student health advisory council; publication of a newsletter and other cooperative efforts with the campus health center; and a community lecture series featuring prominent national and regional speakers. A study of the effectiveness of the health promotion course suggests a positive effect on student behavior and attitudes. (MSE)

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Health Promotion Program

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Funding Agency:

W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Inc.

Grant Number:

UHMDO1J(WJG)

Program Starting Date

July 15, 1982

HE 023 246

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

Abstract

The Health Promotion Program at the University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNCA) is the result of a 1982 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation made jointly to the University and the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC).

A three credit-hour course, Health Promotion and Wellness, was established at UNCA, making the University early among American colleges and universities to offer a credit course in health promotion. At MAHEC, family practice residents were trained in health promotion techniques. They also served as lab leaders in the course.

Over the past seven years, a one credit-hour health promotion course has become part of the General Education Requirements of the University, a Health Promotion Minor has been established, and the Department of Health and Fitness was created by combining the Health Promotion Program and the Physical Education Department.

Programing activities of the Health Promotion Program are varied and extensive. Among the most visible is the nutrition program, which includes a cooperative effort with the University Dining Service to provide healthy food choices in the dining hall and snack bar. Informative luncheons are given as a follow-up to the Program's cholesterol testing, which is offered once each semester to students, faculty and staff.

University Heartwalk is the Health Promotion walking program. It includes a map showing walking routes on campus; a walking group which meets monthly; a walking race as part of the University's annual 5K homecoming Run in the Gardens; and it generated local media coverage that became state-wide when picked-up by the Associated Press.

Other programs include, humor, blood pressure checks, fitness testing, sponsorship of the Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC), and cooperative efforts with the other members of the Weizenblatt Health Center (Student Health Service and Counseling Center), which includes publication of a newsletter.

With University Thrust funding, the Program brought prominent national and regional speakers to campus as part of the Health Promotion Community Lecture Series. The Program also is visible in the community through cooperative projects with area health care providers.

The Program asked the question, "What are the affects, if any, on the lives and attitudes of students who take college health promotion courses?" Data from a follow-up survey after four years of the course suggests a positive affect.

Inception of the Health Promotion Program at the University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNCA) was the result of opportunity and proximity as much as needs or problems. A unique link existed between the University and the Family Practice Residency Program of the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC). A UNCA psychology professor retained a half-time teaching position at the University while serving half-time as a preceptor to family practice residents at MAHEC.

This cooperative effort led to a joint grant proposal and an award from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for $592,000 to establish a health promotion program with a credit course at UNCA, which would involve family practice residents, and to train those residents in health promotion techniques. The UNCA/MAHEC Health Promotion Program was conceived and a three credit-hour course, Health Promotion and Wellness, became part of the UNCA curriculum.

Team taught by Health Promotion faculty, the course covers in depth the areas of aerobic fitness, stress management, interpersonal relationships, nutrition, and behavior change, with discussions on alcohol and drug abuse, AIDS, and other timely health issues. Students are introduced to the concept of self-responsibility and self-control for their health. They are supplied with the knowledge and techniques to facilitate healthy lifestyle changes that can serve them for a lifetime.

At the beginning of the course, students participate in a Cooper 1.5 mile run/jog/walk to establish a fitness level. They, then embark on a semester-long aerobic exercise program of their choice in which they are expected to exercise three times a week for 20 to 30 minutes at target heart rate. At semester's end, a post-test is administered and, except in the most fit people, an improvement is expected and usually realized. Often, this is a significant improvement in which students advance one, two, or occasionally three levels. Other physical assessments done are height, weight, blood pressure, percent body fat, flexibility, sit-ups, push-ups, and grip strength.

Labs, in which students study and practice interpersonal skills, are conducted by faculty, family practice residents, and the staff of the University Student Health Service. Each student writes a personal health contract in which he or she discusses personal health and lifestyle issues and projects short and long range (five year) goals for behavior change.

In 1986, The Physical Self, a one credit-hour version of Health Promotion and Wellness, became part of the General Education Requirements of the University. The Physical Self and one physical education fitness-related course satisfy the University's P.E. requirement. The same physical assessments are conducted in the one-hour course except for the pre and post-test run/jog/walk. Due to the limited class time, 50 minutes per week, the Rockport Walking Test is given only once during the

semester and there is no aerobic exercise requirement. Also, the interpersonal labs are not a part of this course. Approval is expected from the Faculty Senate for a proposed two credit-hour course which will combine an hour of lecture time and an hour of activity lab where the results of behavioral change concepts taught in the course can be observed by the student.

A minor in Health Promotion became part of the University's academic offerings in Fall of 1988, providing students an opportunity to enhance and give added dimension to their majors. Through such courses as "Biological Bases of Human Health," "Biopsychology," "Environmental Health," and "Medical Ethics," the minor gives students a strong background in health issues that will serve them well whether or not they choose a career in a health field. Exciting possibilities exist in the areas of undergraduate research and internships.

In the spring of 1988, the Health Promotion Program and the Physical Education Department combined to create the Department of Health and Fitness. This has made possible a cooperative effort directed at ensuring a stronger academic element in physical education courses.

The effect of the academic offerings of the Health Promotion Program is to educate students on the major health issues of their time and to give them a scientific data base that documents the benefits of behavioral, psychological, and biological change in health promotion. From the beginning, the Program has maintained an interdisciplinary focus, which has grown with the establishment of the minor and the required course. Faculty from Psychology, Biology, Mathematics, and Physical Education teach courses that fulfill health promotion requirements.

Although its primary focus is academic, the Health Promotion Program recognizes a mandate to provide health promotion concepts and information to the entire university community; and, whenever possible, to be involved in health promotion activities in the surrounding community. Therefore, the programming activities are extensive and varied including: nutrition, walking, humor and health, blood pressure checks, and cholesterol testing.

With a mission to make healthy food choices available to the University community, Health Promotion launched "Foods With Health Appeel." Working with the University Dining Service, the Director of Student Activities, and the Housing and Residence Life staff, the HPP brought about significant changes in the menus of the dining hall and snack bar. Healthy alternatives are now offered in both areas and are marked with a small red apple making them easily recognizable. There is a bigger and better salad bar, more chicken, turkey and vegetarian offerings, reduced calorie mayonnaise, bran muffins, low fat milk, fruit juices, etc.

This campaign for good nutrition was inaugurated by a Free Food Tasting Day, when the University community was invited to the lobby of the student center during the lunch hours to sample a variety of healthy and tasty food choices. The response was enthusiastic, both from the tasters and from the campus leaders who volunteered to serve.

HPP often links its message on healthy eating to its cholesterol testing, which is offered each semester to students, faculty, staff and some members of the community. This complete lipid profile, offered for the lab fee only and administered by a MAHEC Family Practice lab tech, is made possible through the ongoing cooperation between UNCA Health Promotion and MAHEC. Participants receive an interpretive sheet with the test results and directions to contact the Student Health Service or a personal physician for further information.

Each cholesterol testing is followed by some type of educational program, usually a luncheon/lecture. "Cooking With Spices, Not Fat," was a luncheon with the food prepared on site. "Fabulous Food and Fiber Luncheon" offered homemade soup, bread, and salad. An M.D. with a special interest in nutrition lectured during a pasta luncheon.

A student's interest in establishing walking trails on campus received the resources and enthusiastic support of the Health Promotion Program. After the trails were measured, a map was created and the project was named "University Heartwalk." An inaugural walk, complete with ribbon cutting, refreshments, speeches, and press and TV coverage, was led by the Academic Vice Chancellor. An article in the local newspaper led to many requests for walking maps.

Health Promotion added a walking race to the UNCA Run in the Gardens, the University's third annual homecoming 5K race. This event draws over 200 runners. The first walking race attracted 50 walkers. Response to these walking activities led to the formation of the Heartwalk Walking Group, which meets monthly for programs and discussions of interest to walkers.

A senior psychology major, in conjunction with faculty from Health and Fitness and Psychology, conducted a research project on the benefits of a walking program on a university campus. Participants included students, faculty, staff, and a member of the UNCA Board of Trustees. Assessments made at the beginning, after two months, and at the end of the five month study yielded significant results as to the benefits gained from the walking program. An Associated Press release on the study resulted in statewide coverage. The paper documenting the study has been submitted for publication.

Convinced of the value of humor and a positive outlook to one's wellbeing, the HPP developed a humor basket of items intended to offer support, appreciation, and a few chuckles, and to be delivered each month to a different department on campus. The HPP also initiated a major humor conference to be held on campus in the spring. UNCA's Counseling Center and Special Academic Programs, the Mountain Area Health Education Center, and Life After Cancer/Pathways joined in sponsorship of this event.

A sneak preview was presented in December "to test the waters." The 100 plus who attended responded so enthusiastically that any doubts about the success of the May conference were removed. Over 300 participants spent a day in May with Dr. Joel Goodman, internationally recognized author and lecturer in the constructive applications of humor and creativity in everyday life and work. Evaluations of the day-long workshop proved that it was an overwhelming success. The joint sponsors are planning a second conference to continue to spread the message of humor and health.

Among the numerous other programs is the Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC) organized in cooperation with the Student Health Service. Members are trained in peer counseling on health issues. The HPP provided a room to serve as a Student Resource Room and stocked it with books, pamphlets, videos, etc. Student health advisors are in the room each day to provide peer health education for UNCA students.

In their first year, SHAC members administered a $500 grant from the Campus Cultural and Special Events Committee and arranged to bring to campus a one-man dramatic presentation on AIDS. They also contacted the American Red Cross and set-up three nights of intensive training in AIDS education, enabling them to give programs for the Resident Assistants and other campus groups.

The HPP offers blood pressure checks at the cholesterol testing and on a weekly basis during the noon hour in various buildings around campus. Exhibits dealing with blood pressure, smoking, exercise and nutrition are displayed in the University library during Heart Month.

A unique aspect of the Weizenblatt Health Center, which houses the Health Promotion Program, is that it also houses the Student Health Service and the Counseling Center. Sharing quarters in the same facility enhances the cooperative functioning of these three services. Each area has a thorough understanding of the nature of the others allowing students to be directed immediately to the service most suited to their needs. The three staffs meet jointly on a regular basis and have combined talents and resources to produce a newsletter.

Cooperative efforts, between the HPP and the Student Health

Service to offer comprehensive health care to the University community have led to CPR classes, Stop Smoking Clinics, "Waist Watchers," and fitness assessments for students, faculty and staff. These two services also cooperate to fulfill the mandate of the governor's statewide WISE program (Wellness Improvement for State Employees).

In conjunction with the state WISE office, Health Promotion and Student Health Service will hold a major regional health fair (Wellness '90 - Western North Carolina Celebrates Health) at UNCA in Spring 1990. Wellness '90 will offer the people of this region an opportunity to assess their personal health and to receive information that will help them to make healthy behavioral changes and assume greater responsibility for their own health.

The fair will bring health care providers and consumers together, making providers aware of community health needs and consumers aware of community health resources; distribute health information of various kinds; offer some direct health services, such as cholesterol and other diagnostic testing; and offer research opportunities for UNCA students.

All Health Promotion programs, as well as any other campus activities that are health and fitness related, are listed on the Health Promotion Calendar. Produced bi-monthly, the calendar is distributed on campus and mailed to interested community agencies and individuals.

Although the mandate of the Health Promotion Program is to serve first and foremost the students, faculty and staff of the University, the Program is often involved in community activities and has forged mutually beneficial ties with many community agencies.

Health Promotion has participated in such activities as the MAHEC Health Fair; Senior Wellness Day sponsored by the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement, which operates from the UNCA campus; and "Operation Cholesterol" sponsored by MAHEC and the local TV station and held in the Asheville Mall.

The HPP and the American Heart Association cooperate closely on many programs including the yearly Heart Month exhibits in the University library. In February 1989, three "Heart Healthy Free Food Fridays," featuring nutritious snacks, breakfast food and deserts, were held in the student center. The Heart Association provided much of the food, as well as numerous handouts.

The Health Promotion Program and the UNCA Health Care Administration Program have worked with many community health care providers to create a Small Business Health Promotion Development Center. The Center serves as a clearing house for

the services available to small businesses who desire to provide health promotion programs for their employees, but are not in a position to establish an in-house program.

The director of the Health Promotion Program jointly authored a study on smokeless tobacco use by elementary school children. A survey was conducted with children in grades one, three, five and seven. The resulting paper has been submitted for publication. An Associated Press release led to nationwide coverage of the study.

As mentioned at the start of this document, UNCA's Health Promotion Program was funded by a Kellogg Foundation grant. With the grant funds, a portion of the student health center was remodelled to create offices for the Health Promotion Program. Furniture and three computers were purchased. The staff consisted of a director, who served half-time with the Program and half-time at MAHEC; a full-time campus coordinator and faculty person; a secretary; a computer programmer; and a part-time accountant. A student was employed on a contracted basis to produce a Program newsletter.

Additional funding became available three years after the original grant when Health Promotion was one of three areas on campus declared by UNCA's chancellor to be Distinctive Thrust Areas, which would receive four years of special funding for their programs. This additional funding made possible many of the HPP activities including the nutrition and walking programs, SHAC and the Student Resource Room, and the Humor Conference.

One of the most significant results of the Thrust was that it enabled the Program to add to its staff a person with outstanding credentials (Public Health Ph.D., J.D.) to organize The Health Promotion Community Lecture Series, which brought wide community visibility to the HPP and the University. Prominent national and regional speakers, as well as UNCA faculty from across a number of disciplines, offered a variety of topics including: "Impact of Advertising & Products on Health Habits," "Legal Aspects of Health Care," "Historical Perspectives of Health Promotion," "Does Everyone Have a Right to Health Care?".

Dr. Albert Sabin, developer of the oral polio vaccine, viewed World Health Issues; Congressman Dale Bumpers spoke on "The Environment and Our Health;" Henry Heimlich, inventor of "The Heimlich Maneuver" talked about "Space Age Medicine;" Christine Mitchell, clinical nurse specialist at Boston's Children's Hospital discussed "Ethical Issues of Medical Care and the Family" and Millie Cooper, assistant director of the Cooper Clinic, shared her views on "Self-Motivation for Health."

As mandated by the Kellogg grant, the University has assumed support of the Program. The staff is smaller, consisting now of

the director, who is also a faculty member; another full-time faculty person; and a full-time state-funded secretary, who serves as editorial consultant, accountant and program assistant.

Despite the increased health promotion activity on college campuses in the United States, two fundamental questions have remained unanswered. Who are the students who are participating in college health promotion, as distinct from the general student population? And, what are the effects of the health promotion programs, if any, on the lives and attitudes of the participants? A four-year study of the UNCA health promotion course was undertaken to try to answer these questions. Self-selected participants were contrasted with the general student body, and with a random-selected control group of individuals who were chosen to match participants on demographic variables. In a quasi-experimental design, both groups were tested at the beginning and the end of the program.

Pre-test results suggest that the health promotion course is sought by persons who feel less in control of health, slightly more stressed and isolated, and who are oriented to physical solutions such as aerobic fitness. Post-test results support a strong shift in attitudes toward a sense of personal control. The course apparently engendered the attitude of self-efficacy and self-responsibility for health, which is one of the key ingredients in health promotion.

In all, results indicate that the health promotion course had a significant influence on health promoting attitudes and behaviors of the participants. A preliminary follow-up survey encourages a conclusion that changes had longevity beyond the time of the course for a significant number of participants.

The focus and goals of the Health Promotion Program have been maintained through continuation of the original course, the addition of the one-hour core curriculum course, establishment of the minor, and through expanded programming.

Asheville is the hub of medical activity for Western North Carolina. Cooperative efforts with many area health care providers have created ties that are advantageous to the Health Promotion Program and to the University. It is, however, a constant challenge to ensure sufficient University financial support. Ingenuity and perseverance in seeking grants and other funding is an ongoing necessity. Nevertheless, the Program has proven itself to be a significant force on campus. Health Promotion has thrust UNCA into the national mainstream of promoting healthy lifestyle changes at the collegiate level.